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while most common in low ground bordering swamps, has for an alternative situation upland rocky woods in the shade of sugar maples.

It is a part of the common experience of field botanists that most plants of any rarity, or special interest are always to be sought each in some preferred soil and other points of environment, and there associated with almost always about the same list of concomitant species belonging to other alliances. Striking exceptions to this general rule may perhaps not be found so rare as we have been accustomed to think, especially when marked species like this which have a wide distribution, shall have been studied ecologically throughout the whole of their extensive range. But I doubt if any other North American plant will be found to occur under such extreme diversity of conditions as this one does, and that, as I suppose *Cypripedium acaule* does, without evincing any considerable diversity morphologically.

One botanical friend, much given to ecologic research, expressed a feeling of surprise at my account of this cypripedium, and wondered if the seeds, for example, of the high-northern bog plant would so much as germinate in the low sultry Potomac valley habitat.

The Name *Stemonitis* a Synonyme.

J. A. NIEUWLAND.

Taking as the fundamental rule for the nomenclature of plants that no names be accepted that antedate May, 2, of the year 1753, when the *Species Plantarum* of Linnaeus was edited, it must be shown that the name *Stemonitis* Gleditsch, 1753, was published later than the above date of Linnaeus' work, or the name as attributed to that author will not hold, assuming that date as the starting point for names of slime moulds. In some of the common texts* the genus is written *Stemonitis*, (Gleditsch) Rostafinski, 1873. The oldest name for the group of plants at present comprised under the genus is that of Micheli, † *Clathroideastrum*, given

* MacBride, T. *North American Slime-Moulds* (1899.)

Cooke, M. C. *Myxomycetes of Great Britain*. (1877.)

† Adanson, M. *Familles des Plantes*, (1763) Vol. 11, p. 7.

in 1729. Adanson restored Micheli's name to the group in 1763, Linnaeus having either disregarded them or put them under another genus aggregate name. It is to be remembered that that *Clathroidastrum* as a name is objectionable from the Linnaean rules of nomenclature, but very little regard is had for the rules Linnaeus laid down, however reasonable they are. The name was formed from *Clathroides*, which in turn was patched up from *Clathrus*, the latter being the name of a genus of fungi. Linnaeus rightly suppressed all such names, but modern systematists not only accept them but have even created such. They are then hardly in a position to reject such a name as even *Clathroidastrum* for etymological reasons. As a matter of fact, the Linnaean rules of nomenclature are not only at present not followed, they are positively ignored. The name must be either *Stemonitis*, Gleditsch, 1753, or *Clathroidastrum*, Adanson, 1763, for those that go back no farther than Linnaeus for plant names, but *Stemonitis*, (Gled.) Rostafinski, 1873, is antedated. The name *Stemonitis*, as given by Ludwig Böhmer, in the Third edition of Ludwig's *Definitiones Plantarum* of 1760, is an impossible aggregate, containing the genera *Stemonitis* proper, *Comatricha*, *Buxbaumia*, one of the mosses, and *Clathrus*, *Sphaerocephalus*, *Eubolus*, several genera of fungi. Such a conglomeration of totally different plants under *Stemonitis*, cannot be accepted under that name by any reasonable scientific method of modern classification. If the month of the publication of Gleditsch's work is not given, as seems to be the case, then there still remains the doubt whether it was even as aggregate of both *Stemonitis* proper and *Comatricha*, published before May 9, of the year 1753, or whether after that date. Until this matter of doubt be cleared up we provisionally indicate that specific names of the genus now under *Stemonitis*, (Gleditsch) Rost. 1873, be referred to the older name, *Clathroidastrum*, Adanson, 1763. For those that do not take the year 1753 as the "starting point" for botanical nomenclature, the name *Clathroidastrum*, Micheli, 1729, seems to be the correct name, and as we shall try to show, is the oldest name for the genus under its modern limitations, i. e. separate from *Comatricha*.

As to the valid publication of the name by Adanson there can be as little doubt as for the publication of *Mucilago*, Adanson, now generally accepted without question. Though Adanson's descriptions are generally brief, and may be suspected of incompleteness,

his references in the cases in question to the more clear and lengthy description of Micheli taken together with the plate of the plant by the latter author, establishes beyond the doubt the identity of the *Clathrodastrum* of Adanson with that of Micheli. M. C. Cooke* apparently following the lead of Rostafinski, seems to infer that the genus *Clathrodastrum* of Micheli is an aggregate of *Stemonitis* proper and *Comatricha*, both names taken here in the sense commonly accepted.

Micheli quotes two species under *Clathrodastrum*:

- (1) *Clathrodastrum obscurum*, Majus, Tab. 94, Fig. 1.
- (2) *Clathrodastrum obscurum*, Minus, Tab. 94, Fig. 2.

The former is considered the type of the modern genus *Stemonitis* and has been called *Stemonitis fusca*, Roth, 1782, the latter has been generally considered to be the present *Comatricha typhina*, (Rost.) M. C. Cook or *Comatricha Stemonitis* (Scop.) Sheld. 1895, though on what grounds is not clear to me. May it not be possible that here as in so many cases in our modern nomenclature an error may have crept in which has been carefully copied by our mycologists no one ever challenging the names by careful examination of the original publication of Micheli?† That the first species of Micheli is a *Stemonitis* is generally admitted. May it not be possible that the second is also a *Stemonitis* taken in the modern sense? Examining the description‡ we find that Micheli states that the plates that illustrate his two species are shown in DD as drawn to their exact natural size, § i. e. to use his own words: "Vera autem plantae magnitudo ea est quae figura DD repraesentatur." Applying an ordinary instrument or rule to the figures we find that one measures 14 millimeters and the second, supposed to be a *Comatricha*, is exactly 10 mm. high. Looking up the description of *Comatricha Stemonitis*, (Scop.) Sheldon, or as some call it *Comatricha typhoides* supposed to have been plant No. 2 of Micheli, we find that it never exceeds less than one-half that size, or to be specific, it ranges from 2-4 mm. Moreover no *Comatricha* of such size was known at that time or for many years later. The natural inference is that the second plant described by Micheli is not a *Comatricha* but a *Stemonitis* proper, which one is

* Cooke, M. C. *Myxomycetes of Great Britain* (1877) p. 46-47.

† Micheli, P. A. *Nova Plantarum Genera*, (1729) p. 214. Tab. 94.

‡ Do p. 215.

§ Do p. 215.

not for me to decide here. Following the description of Micheli which must be taken to mean what it says, the two species are certainly species of *Stemonitis* proper in the modern sense, and therefore *Clathrodastrum* is the oldest name for the group of plants hitherto put under *Stemonitis* proper and the latter name should be relegated to synonymy unless the name *Stemonitis*, Ludwig, 1760, be accepted. We give here the names in order of priority that would be affected by the acceptance of *Clathrodastrum* and unless the name be objected to on the grounds that it offends seriously against the Linnaean rules of nomenclature it has priority in its favor. We refrain from transferring the specific names for reasons laid down by Linnaeus in his *Philosophia Botanica*, regarding names in *oides* and *astrum*. Following is the list of American species affected.

Clathrodastrum, Micheli, 1729.

Clathrodastrum, Adanson, 1763.

Stemonitis, Gleditsch, 1753, in part.

Stemonitis, Ludwig, 1760, in part.

Stemonitis, (Gleditsch) Rostafinski, 1873.

(1) *Stemonitis fusca*, Roth.

(2) *Stemonitis confluens*, Cooke and Ellis, 1876.

(3) *Stemonitis nigrescens*, Rex, 1891.

(4) *Stemonitis maxima*, Schweinitz, 1834.

(5) *Stemonitis virginensis*, Rex, 1891.

(6) *Stemonitis Morgani*, Peck, 1889.

Stemonitis spendens, (Rostafinski), Lister, 1894.

(7) *Stemonitis fenestrata*, (Rex) MacBride, 1899.

(8) *Stemonitis Webberi*, Rex, 1891.

(9) *Stemonitis ferruginea*, Ehren. 1818.

Trichia axifera, Bull, 1791.

(10) *Stemonitis Smithii*, MacBride, 1893.

Stemonitis microspora, (Lister), Morgan, 1894.

(11) *Stemonitis carolinensis*, MacBride, 1893.

Stemonitis tenerrima, (B. and C.) Morgan, 1894.

(12) *Stemonitis pallida*, Wingate, 1897.

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